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Louise Fletcher Solari

Conversation begins mid sentence...

LS: the school stayed open until 19.....

PS: At 1962 was the last graduating class and then I don't know what happened in between.

LS: Are you Evelyn McClure?

PS: No, I'm Pat Solter.

What were you saying about Mary Jane Petersen?

LS: Her name was Fletcher originally. Her great grandfather settled before my grandfather. My grandfather came from the east coast and he bought a portion from, I think, his cousin. And that portion was divided in half and my grandfather was William Russell Fletcher. That was in 1874. And we researched the deed at the county court house.

I'm trying to think of what her great grandfather was, he came first and then my grand father bought the land from him.

The area for the school was already designated, as a school. They were already using it weren't they.

PS: Yes, because 1866 they were using it and 1868 was the deed.

LS: So he arrived in 1874, and what brought him here was because of his relatives here. It must have been his brother. I don't know what they brought with them. They farmed Gravenstein Apples. They were diversified, mostly apples, but also prunes, cherries and pears.

PS: Now where exactly was this, was it off of Green Valley School Rd?

LS: Yes, it was land surrounding the school, to the west of Green Valley School.

The school sort of sat in the middle.

PS: Was the Green Valley School Rd. as it was then?

LS: I think it was a dirt road.

But it hasn't changed much, it's still just as narrow. Which is nice.

My grandfather's name was William Russell Fletcher, I told you that. He married Sarah Murphy. He was about 40 when he married. She was from Sebastopol. Murphy Avenue actually. That's about all I know about her.

My father didn't talk too much about his family, my mother was more informative. Her family was Norwegian. My father was more quiet about that.

My father was William Roy Fletcher and my mother was Lillian Hilve. They were farmers. In the same area.

My father was very hard working, farmed. My mother was very active, she was on the board of trustees of Green Valley School with Bob's grandfather, Lewis Maddocks. Who his dad's named after.

Has any of the Maddock's been here? I went to school with Bob's dad.

My mother was very musical. She played the piano and sang. She performed with groups in Santa Rosa. There were many card parties and pot lucks at the school.

PS: Did your mom have a kitchen garden? Did she do any canning or preserving?

LS: She didn't do the gardening, but she did tons of canning. From the beginning of the season with cherries, pears, apples, tomatoes.

I WAS brought up right here. I finished 8th grade in 1946.

PS: Where was the house?

LS: My grandfather's house and the old houses are not the original houses when they homesteaded there. My cousin lives there, Evelyn Gould Harrison. But she lives on the old home place. My father had a sister and she was older. She lives in the old house, where my grandfather built the original house. That's an old Victorian. Much like the Gerheart.s home where Al was home in Green Valley. It's set back from the road. On Green Valley Rd., when you pass Green Valley School Rd. it the first house on the left. That was where my grandfather, where the original home was. Next to the original home, the original home has been torn down. You can almost miss it, it's all-overgrown. It's a bungalow.

PS: So that's where I grew up, in that house?

LS: Yes. And the barn is still there.

PS: You just had to walk down the street to school.

LS: Yes. I remember during the war - depression the school had a kitchen and they provided meals. They had a cook come. I was supposed to bring my lunch, but I liked the hot lunches that I wanted to eat the cooked meals. It was for the children who couldn't afford a good meal, I guess the county did that.

The teachers I remember most, especially Mrs. Holt who I brought the picture. And Mrs. Georgia Talbot, who is still alive. She was a primary teacher and I just spoke to her, I think she's 91 or 92. I had her and Mrs. Holt Darby as teachers. Then there was Mrs. Bufford who was the principal, I think she came before Mrs. Darby. When Mrs. Bufford left, Mrs. Darby took over. Very good teachers.

PS: Do you have favorite memories of classes, productions or recess games anything like that?

LS: Baseball, I was the only girl on the baseball team. That was fun. I can remember when we set up a tennis court. Mrs. Bufford taught me to play tennis, I loved that. She was a great woman. Liked school.

I attended from 1934 - 1942, 1942 to 1946. Then I went to Jr. College 1946-1948 and then Sonoma State.

My mother was a teacher, but she didn't teach after she was married. She's been a teacher before. She was from North Dakota.

I had a brother; he was four years older than me. Leroy.

PS: That was your only sibling. Do you live around here now?

LS: No, we live in Marin, in Kentfield.

PS: Did you teach around here?

LS: One year in Santa Clara, then we moved to New York and I taught out at Long Island, Great Neck.

I don't know where my father came from, but I know it was East Coast.

PS: Do you have any memories that stand out in particular that you did at school?

LS: Another thing that I remember. His niece rode horse back to school, Marie Dearheart, she lives in southern California. That was quite away, she would come on a pony and hook it up to a fence. From Harrison Grade area.

There was another girl who rode her horse to school, who lives in southern California. Her name was Gene Howell

PS: Have either one of them come to a reunion?

LS: She and her sister are both married, so their names are changed. I think that Gene came about 20 years ago at Bud Chenowith's place. She came by and saw me.

PS: What was the Gerheart girls' name?

LS: Marie, her parents owned a bakery in Santa Rosa. I think that's Al's cousin.

END OF TAPE